

The Seven Stars Tavern  
Woodstown, Salem County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-126

HABS  
NJ  
17-WOODSTOWN

1-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer  
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

HABS  
N.J.  
17. WOODSTOWN

The Seven Stars Tavern  
Woodstown, Salem County, New Jersey

Owner: Mr. John H. Bourne

Date of Erection: 1762

Architect:

Builder: Peter Lauterbach

Present Condition: Very good

Number of Stories: Two and one-half

Materials of Construction: Foundation - stone

Exterior walls - brick,  
Flemish bond with black  
headers

Interior walls - plaster

Inside chimneys

Present roof - asbestos  
shingles, original roof  
wood shingles

Historical Data:

This structure was built in 1762 by Peter Lauterbach, whose initials and those of his wife Elizabeth with that date appear on the southern gable.

The house is a fine example of the large and commodious old brick Colonial building erected for use as a public house. For many years it was one of the most celebrated taverns in New Jersey. It was on

N.S.  
17 - Woodnut V.  
1'

a stage route and was also a gathering place for local celebrities.

An old Dutch oven built into the structure is one of the features of the house. There is a small window in the wall at the end of the bar through which liquid refreshments could be served; it was possible for horsemen to imbibe without dismounting. Incidentally, the liquor thus imbibed cost less. Upon one of the panes of this window the inscription "Preston Woodnut, Apr. 15, 1805" may still be seen. The old iron work of the house is unchanged - hand-made hinges, locks, keys, and ancient knocker.

John Louderback, son of Peter (note the change in name), lived at the Seven Stars during the Revolution. According to family tradition, he supplied the American army with great quantities of food. The British put a price on his head. The place was raided; Louderback and his family hid in the woods until the danger was over.

Ghost stories and romantic tales are interwoven in the history of the place. "There is a tradition that a person was hanged outside of the window at the Seven Stars Tavern. The writer remembers having heard of a similar tradition but is not sure where it happened; he thinks it was further up the King's Highway at the 'Death of the Fox'." (Stewart)

The first license for the Seven Stars was granted to Peter Lauterbach, the builder, four years after the house was built in 1766. It remained an inn until it was conveyed to Nathaniel Robbins in December 1805; since that time it has been used solely as a residence.

N.J.  
17-WOOTD. v.  
1-

## Bibliography:

Deeds and Court Records for  
Salem County

Salem Sunbeam Issues of October  
14, 1927 and July 25, 1931

Standard and Jerseyman Issues of  
July 23, 1930 and January 22, 1931

Sickler, J.S. The Old Houses of  
Salem County Salem, Sunbeam Publish-  
ing Company, 1934

Stewart, F.H. The Salem County in the  
Revolution Salem, Salem Standard and  
Jerseyman, 1932

Walter C. Rutt  
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams  
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, A.T.A.  
District Officer

Rev. Dec. 1, '34 T.H.W.